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UNCLAS COLOMBO 000125

SIPDIS

FSINFATC FOR SPAS/POL: ELLEN COSGROVE

DEPARTMENT FOR SA/INS

E.O. 12958: DECL: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [AFSI](#) [AFSN](#) [PGOV](#) [CE](#)

SUBJECT: Nomination for Political FSN training course

Ref: 02 State 255305

1. In response to Reftel, Mission nominates Ms. Padmini Raajadurai to attend the April 7 to 18 training course for Political FSNs at NFATC.

2. Information on the nominee is keyed to the order of the queries in Reftel:

Name -- Padmini Raajadurai  
Grade -- FSN-10  
Length of Service -- 4 years and 5 months  
Time spent in the U.S. -- 6 weeks (In 1979 and 2002 Ms. Raajadurai vacationed in the U.S.)  
Previous training in the U.S. -- None  
Previous nominations for political training course -- Yes, for May 2002 course

3. Narrative justification for nomination:

The peace process between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers has sharply increased the Political Section's workload. Ms. Raajadurai's portfolio has been crucial in this timeframe, as we turn to her constantly for information on what is happening Tamil-speaking areas, including those areas now controlled by the Tamil Tigers, a notorious terrorist organization. To keep track of what is happening in the Tamil community, Mission will be adding a Tamil-speaking Political Officer in April 2003. We expect that Raajadurai will play a key role in educating this officer on the situation in Sri Lanka, including travelling with him to key points throughout the island.

Raajadurai has developed excellent contacts, and has the ability to retrieve vast amounts of information from those contacts in timely manner. She also manages her time well and responds to requests from the officers in the Section in a timely manner. Based on the contributions she has made to the Section, she was recently promoted to a FSN 10.

With her recent promotion, however, she will be expected to perform at an even higher-level. Raajadurai has the potential to do so, but must improve in certain areas. The proposed training will enhance her interview, briefing and drafting skills. It will also assist in defining what information is important to the USG. Raajadurai is also becoming more involved in planning certain aspects of VIP visits. The training provided in this area will be used regularly, as Embassy Colombo has seen a surge in the number of visits since the advent of the peace process.

In addition, a new FSN recently joined the political section. If Raajadurai is selected to attend the training, she can use the techniques and procedures she learns at NFATC to assist the new FSN in learning his responsibilities. One of Raajadurai's strengths is her ability and willingness to share information with her co-workers. Thus, training for Raajadurai will have a multiplier effect within the Political Section.

Mission would also be able to use the time set aside for consultations to great use. The information that Raajadurai provides to the Mission is often shared directly with the Department. The opportunity to meet directly with the offices we are reporting to will assist her in fine tuning her information-gathering towards fulfilling USG interests.

Currently, neither of the two FSNs in the Mission's Political Section have had the opportunity to take part in a NFATC Political FSN training course. It is Mission's strong belief that providing Ms. Raajadurai with political training will immeasurably improve the Section's capabilities, thus helping Mission achieve U.S. goals in Sri Lanka.

AMSELEM